# Table of Contents

Welcome to the Building Rep Handbook! ................................................................. 1
The Boston Teachers Union: Who, What, When, Where ........................................ 2
The Role of the Building Representative ................................................................. 5
   The ABC’s of being a Building Representative ......................................................... 7
   Important Dates and Action Items (SY 2021-2022) .................................................... 8
   Suggested Activities .................................................................................................. 12
Organizing 101 ........................................................................................................ 13
   Organizing Tool #1: Having One-on-One Conversations .......................................... 13
   Organizing Tool #2: Mapping Your Workplace .......................................................... 14
   Organizing Tool #3: Problem-Solving Roadmap ....................................................... 15
BTU Committee on Political Education (COPE) ......................................................... 16
Filing a Grievance ..................................................................................................... 17
   Sample Grievance Letter ........................................................................................ 19
   How to file a Class Size Grievance .......................................................................... 20
   Class Size Maxima .................................................................................................. 22
   Representing a Member at an Investigatory Meeting ............................................... 24
Conducting Elections and Faculty Votes .................................................................. 25
Faculty Senate Guidelines .......................................................................................... 26
Setting Up a Successful Faculty Senate Is As Easy As 1-2-3 ........................................ 28
Contract Action Team (CAT) ..................................................................................... 30
Role of the School Site Council, the Personnel Subcommittee and the Instructional Leadership Team ................................................................. 32
   School Site Council .................................................................................................. 32
   Personnel Subcommittee ......................................................................................... 33
   Instruction Leadership Team .................................................................................. 33
   Important Contract Language ................................................................................ 33
Common Questions about PD and Scheduling ......................................................... 34
Resources for Autonomous Schools ......................................................................... 37
   Four Types of Autonomous Schools in BPS ............................................................ 37
   Pilot School Schedules .......................................................................................... 38
   Turnaround School Schedules ................................................................................ 39
   Crafting a Thoughtful Election to Work Agreement (EWA) ...................................... 40
Welcome to the Building Rep Handbook!

Congratulations on being elected as a Building Rep! Whether it’s your 1st year in this leadership role or your 20th, we’re excited to have you. Building Reps are the backbone of the BTU. By engaging other members in your building, you will continue to fight for fairness and equity in our schools and to work towards building a strong and effective union.

In this handbook, you will find lots of information! We suggest reading it through, and keeping it nearby as a reference throughout the year. Here’s what you’ll find:

1. The **Boston Teachers Union: Who, What, When, Where** will provide an overview of the BTU’s role, how to stay in touch, and an introduction to BTU staff.

2. The **Role of a Building Rep** will cover your responsibilities, timelines, and suggestions for how to do a great job.

3. The **Faculty Senate** section will explain the role of a Faculty Senate and how to set up, run, and follow-up on meetings.

4. The **Contract Action Team (CAT)** section will explain how to get your building ready to mobilize around school-based or union-wide issues.

5. The **Role of the School Site Council, the Personnel Subcommittee and the Instructional Leadership Team** will outline how each of these bodies works, and your role in supporting them.

6. **Getting to Know the Contract** will explain changes to the contract. Be sure you study up on the whole contract as well.

7. The **Resources for Autonomous Schools** section has additional documents for members at Pilot Schools, Innovation Schools, Turnaround Schools and other autonomous schools to reference and find the information you need.
The Boston Teachers Union: Who, What, When, Where

The Boston Teachers Union is the exclusive collective bargaining agent for the school system’s 7,500 teachers, other non-administrative, professional employees, paraprofessionals, and substitute teachers. We also represent 3,000+ retirees.

The BTU believes in building POWER!

Professional growth and expertise.
Organizing with our students, parents, and community.
Workers’ rights and labor solidarity.
Equity, inclusion and social justice.
Respect for our profession and members.

What are the BTU’s primary responsibilities?

1. Negotiate and enforce the contract.
2. Provide the best education we can for the system’s 55,000 students.
3. Work with the school community to ensure our students have the schools they deserve.
4. Represent the membership in all matters related to their professional work.
5. Answer job-related questions and assist in any job-related matter, i.e., help our members navigate through Bolling Building bureaucracy.
6. Promote public education and work to ensure adequate funding to support improvements in public education.
7. Advocate for sustainable, quality working and retirement conditions.
8. Promote the growth and well-being of our profession.
9. Work politically through COPE (Committee on Political Education) to elect pro-public education, pro-union candidates.
10. Negotiate health care and provide health and welfare benefits to our members.

The BTU is affiliated with:

1. American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
2. AFL-CIO, Mass AFL-CIO
3. AFT-Massachusetts (AFTMA)
4. Greater Boston Labor Council (GBLC)

How to get in contact with the BTU

- Visit our office at 180 Mt. Vernon St., Dorchester
  Business Hours, 8-5 all workdays, except legal holidays.
- Call 617-288-2000
How to join the BTU’s 10,500-member list-serve:

- Go to www.btu.org and click on “bulletin” in the top left corner
- This list-serve is used only for the dissemination of the weekly BTU e-Bulletin. The list is not used for any other purpose including, business, political or personal. The list is fully protected and will not be used for ANY other purpose.

What is the leadership structure of the BTU?

All policy is set by the membership at its regularly scheduled monthly membership meetings on the 2nd Wednesday* of each month at 4:30pm at union headquarters. Refreshments and tabling resources are available when doors open at 4:00. All members are welcome to attend and arrive early to meet other members.

The BTU’s policy board is its Executive Board, comprised of 12 members elected at large every two years and the seven elected officers and staff.

Serving as a direct link between the union office and the membership are elected BTU Building Representatives from every building and program in the city. BTU Building Reps are elected each year to service the members at each school site and act as the liaisons between the union office and our membership in our schools.

BTU Executive Board

Robert Carroll
Brenda Chaney
Allison Doherty
Caitlin Gaffny
Cheryl Kelly
Michael Maguire
Nicole Mullen
James “Timo” Philip
Rosalinda Midence
CasSandra Samuel
Vanessa A LaRoque
Alice Yong
The BTU officers and staff
Jessica Tang, President          jtang@btu.org
Erik Berg, Executive Vice-President eberg@btu.org
Michael McLaughlin, Secretary-Treasurer mmclaughlin@btu.org
Caren Carew, Secondary Field Rep. ccarew@btu.org
Lea Serena, Elementary Field Rep. lserena@btu.org
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Erica Kouka, Organizer ekouka@btu.org
Roberto Jimenez-Rivera, Political Organizer rjimenez@btu.org
Michael J. Maguire, Co-Editor, Boston Union Teacher mmaguire@btu.org
The Role of the Building Representative

Building Representatives hold a very important role in not only our union, but in our schools as well. In general, there are five main roles of Building Representatives. These roles are described below:

1. **Leader** – Building Representatives, by definition, represent our members and the Boston Teachers Union. Our building representatives must be effective leaders that other members feel comfortable turning to for support in a variety of ways. It is important to be approachable and to model professionalism as a lead educator so that you are in the best position possible to advocate for what is needed to improve the school, support our members, and best serve our students. It is important to lead by example, take initiative, and act as a team player.

2. **Communicator** – Building Reps help other staff to understand BTU positions and policy, to learn about changes that are happening in the field, to learn about opportunities to become more engaged, and to help members make their voices heard in the union and policy world. To be a great communicator, it is important to STAY INFORMED! It is absolutely important that Reps attend membership and Building Rep meetings; open, read and respond to emails and mailings you receive; and read the E-Bulletin each week. It is also important to become familiar with the contract, read the BTU Newspapers, and above all ASK QUESTIONS if you don’t understand something or need help! The union depends on building reps for two-way communication.

3. **Organizer** – That means having your building structured so that there is a visible, functioning Union network that can be used to not only enforce the contract, but to advocate for positive changes to improve our schools and beyond. There should be structures for members to meet regularly, communicate information between members, and to engage members in larger efforts to improve not just your own school, but beyond. **Over the course of this school year, Building Reps will be collaborating with other members to establish Contract Action Teams.** It is our job to educate our new members about the importance of the Union and to encourage their participation. We must build organizational capacity by signing up new members, listening to what our members need, having conversations to build community, and taking action as needed.

4. **Problem-Solver** – As a problem solver, Building Reps help to mediate conflicts, overcome challenges, and facilitate productive communication between our members and the administration. Serving as an active member of the Faculty Senate is one way to do so. You can help in the day-to-day school activities and keep the Senate informed about Union policy. But it may go beyond the Senate. You may be required to meet with the building administration to iron out school problems, especially as they relate to areas of the contract. And, of course, it includes handling grievances at Step One. The Field Reps are always available to support you in this aspect of your role. In autonomous schools, Building Reps make sure that the Election to Work Agreement is revised and updated, as needed.

5. **Friend** – Especially for members new to a building, Representatives act as someone they can turn to for help and to get questions answered, and to feel welcomed into a new environment. Reps should be the first to welcome new members. The BTU is a collection of all of us sharing our common hopes, and aspirations, and our friendship. Alone and isolated we are just employees. Together, we are the Boston Teachers Union.
Be prepared! Make sure you have the following tools handy to help you. Anything you’re missing can be picked up at the BTU office:

- Contracts, including Election to Work Agreements, Innovation Plans, or Charter MOUs if applicable
- Building Rep Handbook
- Membership Applications/COPE cards
- Voter Registration Cards
- List of all BTU members at your school including phone and personal email
- Lists – members of your school’s current School Site Council, as well as, your school’s Bylaws, ILT members, SST members, and Parent Council members.

Website addresses:
- BTU – [www.btu.org](http://www.btu.org)
- AFT – [www.aft.org](http://www.aft.org)
- BPS – [www.boston.k12.ma.us](http://www.boston.k12.ma.us)
- AFT-MASS – [www.aftma.net](http://www.aftma.net)

Each school or group is allowed one (1) representative for every twenty-five (25) Union members or portion thereof. Elections should be held and the results reported in writing to the Union office by June 1. Thereafter, the attendance sheets for meetings will be set up to determine eligibility for the Building Rep stipend.
The ABC’s of being a Building Representative

A  Attend 70% of BTU monthly meetings, the Building Rep weekend and special building representative meetings. Use the BTU app to document your union activities.

B  Be a mediator between BTU members and administration.

C  Check on all teaching and non-teaching assignments in the building.

D  Disseminate all BTU information.

E  Evaluation- Make sure the process is followed correctly.

F  Find out answers for the building staff from Field Reps.

G  Grieve contract violations in a timely fashion.

H  Help new teachers, paras, subs and ABAs become familiar with their rights and responsibilities under the contract.

I  Intercede when necessary on behalf of those who elected you.

J  Judge nothing until all sides have been heard.

K  Keep a close eye on class size in your building (especially in the Fall).

L  Lesson Plans – be able to show evidence of planning – past practice dictates that the plan book is a “working calendar.”

M  Meet regularly with faculty senate, school site council and staff members.

N  Never be involved in evaluating or judging a member of the BTU.

O  Organize, organize, organize.

P  Participate in and post all BTU activities – be involved to be aware.

Q  Quickly handle issues in your building before they escalate.

R  Reserve the right to be present at meetings with administration when any BTU members request it, when it may result in disciplinary action.

S  Share and post all information from BTU meetings and mailings.

T  Take time to check in with your co-workers

U  Use your BTU period to make contact with all BTU members in your building.

V  Violations – report them to the BTU office within 30 days.

W  Welcome all eligible BTU members, make sure they sign All-In membership application cards.

X  Examine all directives from the office and Bolling Building for contract violations.

Y  YOU – be an effective link between your staff and the BTU.

Z  Zero in on issues of great importance to your staff – the Field Reps. and BTU staff can always come and answer questions or deal with problems – we are just a phone call away!
## Important Dates and Action Items

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description and Action Items</th>
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| At the start of the school year | 1. Set up one-on-one meetings with all new members in your building, including subs! Make sure everyone has signed an All-In membership application card.  
2. Make sure you have a BTU bulletin board in your building. Update it with new flyers and communications from the BTU.  
3. Collect phone numbers and personal emails from all members. Create or update your school union listserv.  
4. Meet together as building reps and map your building. Each building rep should have 25 people or less that they are responsible for communicating and following up with. |
<p>| September 7, 2021           | Opening day of school: first 30 minutes for admin, remainder of the day teachers and paras prepare room. 6-hour workday. |
| September 8                 | Day 2: First 30 minutes for BTU for union business; remaining for admin for PD. 6-hour workday. |
| September 9                 | Students in grades 1-12 report |
| September 13                | Pre-K and Kindergarten students report |
| First 2 weeks of school (and ongoing) | Check on class sizes for all regular education, special education, and bilingual education classrooms. Classes that exceed the contractual or statutory maximum should be reported to the BTU office promptly and a Class Size Grievance filed online. |
| October 15                  | Deadline for electing School Site Council members. Make sure to hold timely elections following the protocols described in your Building Rep handbook. |
| October 22-24               | BTU Fall Conference in Portsmouth, NH. All Building Reps are encouraged to register and attend. |
| October 31                  | Deadline for the first meeting of the newly-elected School Site Council |
| November 1 - November 30   | The open enrollment period for enrolling in Flexible Spending Accounts is usually during this period. |
| December 1                  | If a position is known to be vacant until the end of the school year and is occupied by a long term sub as of December 1, that person is entitled to a provisional teacher contract. If an individual in your building is in a position that you believe is worthy of a contract, call the union office. |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 3</td>
<td>PD Day. No students. Day may be converted to PD hours by staff vote.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 15</td>
<td>In Pilot schools, the proposed work schedule for an upcoming school year will be provided to staff by this date. The staff may override the schedule by a two-thirds vote. An override sends the work schedule back to the pilot’s Governing Board for possible adjustment and tweaking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Application deadline for leave of absence to commence at the beginning of the next teacher work year. Application deadline for extension of leave of absence scheduled to expire at the beginning of the next teacher work year. Application deadline to cut short a scheduled leave of absence and to return to work at the beginning of the next teacher work year. Please note: the January 15 deadline may be waived in extenuating circumstances. Please call the BTU for more information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By this date, BTU staff at Turnaround Schools shall be given notice of any additional summer hours, their individual staggered start and end time for the upcoming school year, and/or a change in assignment for the upcoming school year. In any school, when implementing an inclusion model, the Principal or Headmaster must also notify impacted teachers by this date.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Application deadline for filing of additional program areas for permanent teachers. Teachers who hold multiple licenses should apply for additional program areas as described in Circular HRS-HS7A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 1</td>
<td>BTU Staff at Turnaround Schools and Pilot Schools shall be given notice of excess by this date, and they may voluntarily excess themselves by this date.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers may voluntarily excess themselves, as described in Circular HRS-HS7.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A list of all non-teaching assignments for which administrative periods are given in a teachers’ program shall be posted in each school. These assignments may be applied for in the teacher’s program preference sheet as herein provided.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Deadline for Principals to make recommendations as to which provisional teachers they want to make permanent teachers.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deadline for programming preference sheets to be distributed to all teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 15</td>
<td>Deadline for submission to OHC of an additional program application if results of NTE or Praxis exam are needed but unavailable on January 15.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Teacher members of the school-site inclusion planning teams in traditional schools shall be chosen by the school's faculty. Each Principal/Headmaster shall notify teachers of any inclusion plan to be implemented in their school during next school year prior to February 15.

In Pilot schools by this date of a given year, there must be an approved schedule in place — one that has not been overridden — or the current year's pilot school schedule remains in place.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>Deadline to return all preference sheets to school administrator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 27</td>
<td>The Superintendent shall make permanent appointment of provisional teachers by this date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each April</td>
<td>For all PD hours, the ILT in each school shall hold a meeting with the faculty to solicit ideas for the content of professional development in the following school year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early April to early May</td>
<td>OPEN ENROLLMENT for Group Insurance sign-up. Please note this is not an Early May contractual deadline, but it is a city practice to begin the open enrollment period on the first Monday in April and to close it on the first Friday in May.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 15</td>
<td>All involuntarily excessed teachers and nurses in non-Turnaround, non-Pilot schools will be notified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>For teachers on leaves of absence: For those who respond by January 15 as to why they cannot make a decision at that time, they must send a response, postmarked no later than May 1, as to whether or not they will return in September. If they fail to respond by May 1, they shall forfeit their attachment rights, their excess pool rights, and shall be subject to reassignment by the Superintendent. No final records will be required of teachers until May 1 for Grade 5, and 15 days before the close of school for all other grades. Final marks shall not be required of any teacher before May 1 for Grade 8, and 15 days before the close of school for Grade 6 and 7. The number of marking periods for all schools shall not exceed five (5) in number. Final marks shall not be required of any teacher before May 1 for seniors, and 15 days before the close of school for other students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Hold timely elections to elect building representatives for your school for the following school year. Make sure to follow the protocols described in your Building Rep handbook.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### June 1
- **Submit Building Rep election results online at [www.btu.org](http://www.btu.org).**
- A BTU teacher unit member will be given written notice of layoff by June 1 of the professional work year preceding the professional work year in which the layoff is to take place. For example, a teacher to be laid off effective in September must be given written notice on or before the prior June 1.

### June 15
- BTU teacher unit members who are provisional must be given notice of non-renewal by this date or rehire is mandated under state law.

### No later than 10 days before the end of the school year
- Teachers shall be given the following information on their programs for the next school year:
  - Subjects and grades of subjects to be taught
  - Any special information about particular classes teachers may be required to teach, and the grade and particular type of home room.

### No later than 5 days before the end of the school year
- Teachers should receive their total program for the following school year, which shall include the periods-and rooms where their assignments are scheduled. Programs may be considered-subject to change if necessary because of changes in subject enrollments, faculty-changes, or programming conflicts. Reasons for any such change shall be given-by the principal or headmaster to any teacher affected.

### Last Day of School
- All teachers must receive a certificate from the principal for all hours spent in school-based PD during the school year.

### Ongoing
- Familiarize yourself with the contract.
- Attend membership meetings (2nd Wednesday of each month).
- Ensure that there is an active Faculty Senate.
- Get members engaged in union committees and bodies.
- Have conversations with all members in your building.

Have questions? Need support or help? Contact your Field Rep, or a member of the BTU Organizing Team! 617-288-2000
## Suggested Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Little Steps</th>
<th>Medium Steps</th>
<th>Big Steps</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make sure everyone knows who the BTU Building Reps are.</td>
<td>Establish a list-serve of all members with non-bps emails that you can use to send out information.</td>
<td>Engage members in the collective bargaining process and organize members out to rallies and events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make sure there is at least one building rep.</td>
<td>Hold timely elections.</td>
<td>Encourage members to actively vote in all union elections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend monthly membership meetings-and stay the whole time!</td>
<td>Build relationships with all members.</td>
<td>Meet/talk with each member to have “organizing conversations” to find out what issues are important to them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make sure all members have a contract book.</td>
<td>Know the common contractual grievances and violations.</td>
<td>Know how to write a grievance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send a synopsis of membership meetings to all members (you can get one from your Member Organizer) in your school community.</td>
<td>Attend the Building Rep conference</td>
<td>Mobilize/recruit members for political action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish regular membership meetings/gatherings to give updates (try a 10 minute meeting, maybe before or after a PD)</td>
<td>Establish an active Faculty Senate (with an agenda, notes, roles, calendar of meeting dates)</td>
<td>Establish a regular meeting time with admin to share ideas and solutions from your member-ship meetings and/or Faculty Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain an active bulletin board with flyers, notes and events</td>
<td>Ensure that there is School Site Council with elections before Oct 15.</td>
<td>Attend a parent council meeting and introduce yourself as a resource.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a relationship with administrators.</td>
<td>Get members engaged in union committees and bodies.</td>
<td>Initiate community outreach to organizations in your school’s neighborhood.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Which could be your goals for this year?**
Organizing 101

As a Building Rep, being an organizer is about building relationships and building power for the schools our students deserve. An organized building is one where relationships are strong, Building Reps understand what motivates their members, and educators, students, and parents are united in fighting for education justice. Even if it feels like your building is far from this level of organization, there are always steps you can take towards getting more organized. Below are some tools every organizer should have in their toolbox. More resources on how to be a successful organizer can be found at labornotes.com/secrets.

Organizing Tool #1: Having One-on-One Conversations

The key to being a successful organizer is being a good listener. An effective organizer listens at least 70% of the time, and talks no more than 30%. Your first task as a Building Rep should be to set up one-on-one meetings with people in your building, especially new members or members you don’t know. Some guidelines for having these conversations:

Get in the Door: Introduce yourself and explain why you want to sit down and talk. Your reason for starting a conversation might range from “I want to welcome you to the school and answer any questions you might have” to “I’ve been hearing that folks in the building are struggling with X and I want to hear your perspective on it.”

Get the Story: Most of the conversation should be dedicated to asking probing questions to learn about what the other person cares about, what motivates them, and what concerns them. Prepare for the conversation by brainstorming what questions you might ask to help you learn about the other person’s perspective on the issues, what they are passionate about or topics you may want to hear more about. LISTEN!!!

Share a Vision of the Union: This is your opportunity to share your own personal story so that the conversation becomes a two-way exchange. Make connections between what you heard and your own motivations for getting involved in the union. Ask questions to help the other person imagine what is possible when we build power together.

Get a Commitment: Oftentimes, a successful one-on-one meeting ends with the other person making a commitment. Sometimes the commitment might be as simple as meeting again in the future to follow-up and continue building the relationship. Other times you might have a very specific commitment in mind, such as asking someone to sign a membership card, attend a meeting or take an action.
Organizing Tool #2: Mapping Your Workplace

Mapping means understanding every single member in your workplace: how to contact them, where to physically find them, and your plan for moving them to action.

Some steps to take when mapping your workplace:

1. **Make a contact list of all BTU members in your workplace.** Lists should include phone numbers and emails (using personal, not work, emails). Use the list to create or update a union listserv for your workplace.

2. **Assign each member to a Building Rep or other member leader that will be responsible for one-on-one conversations with that person.** This is a decision that should be made by meeting together as Building Reps, if you have more than one Building Rep at your worksite. Since there’s a 25:1 BTU member to Building Rep ratio, no Building Rep should be assigned more than 25 members. This is an important step because — although they are important forms of communication — emails, social media posts, and texts do not lead to organized workplaces. Nothing is more powerful than a face-to-face conversation.

3. **Get a piece of chart paper and make a physical map of your building.** Start by adding every single BTU member to your map. Then use different colors, symbols, and sticky notes to label details such as:
   - Spots in the building where people often congregate and where organizing conversations can happen
   - Different groups that exist within a building (ex: different grade levels, different programs, car pools, social groups)
   - Organic leaders (ex: the most respected people in the building, members with strong relationships with parents or students, people who organize social outings)
   - Levels of union support (ex: Who showed up to the last action? Who shows up to Faculty Senate meetings?)

4. **Use your contact list and map every time a union action comes up.** Again, emails, social media posts, and texts do not lead to organized workplaces. Have a plan for reaching every single person with a face-to-face interaction whenever a union action comes up, such as a petition or rally. Use one-on-one conversations to build relationships and get small commitments first so that people are ready for bigger commitments later.

5. **Bonus Step: Get your whole school community involved!** You can use mapping to identify parents, students, community partners, neighbors and others involved, too!
Organizing Tool #3: Problem-Solving Roadmap

Filing a grievance is only one tool in your toolbox! When problems arise at your workplace use the flowchart below to help you decide what action steps to take.

**Problem-Solving Roadmap**

1. **You Hear about a problem**
   - You and the worker(s) investigate the Problem
   - Decide if it’s a grievance
   - If YES file the grievance
     - Ask yourself: is it an important issue we can organize around?
       - If YES process the grievance and create and organizing plan
       - If NO Process the grievance
     - If NO explain to the worker that there is nothing more to do at this time
   - If NO Ask yourself: is it an important issue we can organize around?
     - If YES Create and Organizing plan

**IS THIS AN ISSUE TO RAISE AT FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS?**
BTU Committee on Political Education (COPE)

Why is political action important for our Union?

The political action program makes decisions to endorse candidates. The program follows a process for endorsing candidates voted upon by the committee, then presented to the executive board for a vote then to the membership for the final approval through their vote. Elected officials affect education through decisions they make. They vote on funding and budgets for public schools, and they set policies that affect our working conditions. These decisions can have an impact on our ability to negotiate issues such as salary, class size, transfer provisions, school building improvements, and many other factors that impact our students and schools. Elected leaders can have a huge impact on our ability to do our job well and support our students!

What is the process used by the Union to endorse candidates?

The COPE committee meets when needed to make decisions about whether or not to endorse a political candidate running for office. Candidates are provided a series of questions pertaining to issues that would support our members before being asked to come before the committee for an interview. Decisions are made via candidate voting records by incumbent candidates, responses to questionnaires and in-person interviews. Decisions can also be made based on support for or against bills presented for upcoming legislation. That legislation could include COLA for retirees, support for English Language Learners, funding for education, educator licensure, and other bills on education.

The committee then votes by a 2/3’s decision to recommend to the Executive Board. The Executive Board votes on the recommendations from COPE by a 2/3’s decision before sending it to a vote by the members for a 2/3’s decision at the membership meeting. If the membership endorses the candidate, the candidate will be backed by our Union throughout their campaign.

Why are members asked to pay into COPE?

Based on state and federal laws there are restrictions on what Union dues are used for. A member can voluntarily decide how much is deducted for COPE. For example, members can contribute through payroll deduction by a suggested minimum of $2.00 for Teachers and $1.00 for Paraprofessionals on their COPE card. COPE reports political actions to members at membership meetings. As required by law there is a yearly audit to confirm that funds were documented for appropriate use. The BTU Committee on Political Education (COPE) is the program that supports the Union’s political action. The COPE committee members are appointed by the BTU President for a two-year term. The BTU uses COPE to endorse candidates in local elections.
Filing a Grievance

One of the most important duties of the Building Representative is the handling of grievances at Step One. Therefore, it is imperative that all Building Representatives become thoroughly familiar with the “Dispute Resolution” sections of the contract, and especially with the paragraphs which deal with the filing of a grievance at the school level. This is found in Article X of the teacher contract and Article V of the paraprofessional, substitute, and ABA contracts. (Pilot and Innovation Schools should reference their Election to Work Agreement regarding the grievance process.)

Put in general terms, a “grievance” is a statement which says that a teacher’s rights have been violated due to a misinterpretation or misapplication of the contract. It is not a general complaint or claim of unfair treatment.

The importance of filing a grievance when applicable is obvious. A grievance must be filed every time an individual teacher’s rights are violated in order to protect the rights of the entire membership.

The following is a list of guidelines which the Building Rep should follow in filing a grievance.

Gathering information before meeting with the Administrator

1. Get all the facts from the teacher(s) involved in the grievance.
2. Get copies of all pertinent documents related to the grievance, e.g. bulletins, notices, letters, e-mails, memos, etc. (Building representatives have the right to obtain copies of all official school documents).
3. Examine the contract and locate any articles of the contract that have been violated.

Initial meeting with the Administrator

1. Request a meeting with the Administrator and the teacher(s) involved.
2. Present the case orally. Show documents and cite the contract violation(s). Explain the Union’s position and request that the violation be resolved.
3. It is of the utmost importance that in these meetings the Building Representatives be prepared, be professional and remain courteous (but firm). Do not insult the Administrator or attempt to intimidate him or her in any way. On the other hand, do not approach the Administrator as a subordinate. In this situation, as a representative of the Union the Building Representative is on equal ground with the Administrator.
4. Make every effort to reach a resolution consistent with the contract at this meeting. This will save time, work, and money for the Union and possibly considerable inconvenience for the grievant.

Written Grievance

1. If the Administrator is unwilling to resolve the grievance at this meeting, file a written grievance with the Administrator. (Be sure to make several copies of the grievance – one for yourself, one for the grievant and one for the Union office.)
2. The grievance letter should be succinct but civil. It should include the following information; Name and position of the grievant, Statement of the grievance, Action requested, and Name of Union Representative. Send a copy of the grievance to the appropriate Field Representative.
Contacting the Union Office

1. If the Administrator denies the grievance or fails to respond to the grievance within five school days, a Field Representative should be contacted. You can call 617-288-2000 or email the appropriate Field Rep.

2. Send copies of the grievance letter and all pertinent documents to the Union office via email to your Field Representative, via mail to 180 Mt. Vernon Street, Dorchester, MA 02125 or fax to 617-288-0024.

3. While the grievance is in process, the BTU member must comply with the administrative directive in dispute. The Field Rep will refer the grievance to mediation, and if the grievance is deemed valid by the union, two trained mediators will meet with the grievant and the administrator. If this fails, Step Two of the grievance procedure will be handled by the union’s Executive Vice President.

While the Grievance is in Progress

1. The Building Representative should request the Administrator to put in writing any disputed orders or assignments.

2. The Building Representative should not advise a teacher to disobey or ignore an Administrator’s order while a grievance is in progress. This may well hurt the chances for a successful resolution of the grievance and possibly leave the teacher open to charges of insubordination.
Sample Grievance Letter

September 1, 2021

Dear Headmaster Washington,

This letter is to inform you that I am filing a grievance at step one on behalf of Mr. John Adams, a member of the English Department at the Jefferson Elementary School. Mr. Adams’s grievance is that on Tuesdays he is assigned to teach periods one, two, three and four totaling 200 minutes.

This program is in violation of the Contract including but not limited to Article V. Section A 3 (d) which states:

“Teachers shall not be required to teach more than 160 minutes without a lunch break, planning and development period, or an administrative duty.”

In order to resolve this contract violation, Mr. Adams must be relieved of one of his four consecutive classes.

Respectfully yours,
Mary Smith-Jones
BTU Building Representative
How to file a Class Size Grievance

1. Go to www.btu.org
2. Follow the link under the “Contract” menu to “Class Size Grievance”
3. The grieved teacher must fill out and submit the online form
4. Download the linked Class Size Grievance Tracking Form and keep track of your enrollment throughout the school year.

All class size grievances are now filed online. If a teacher in your school has a roster of students who have reported to school that exceeds their class size maximum, please direct them to the BTU website to file their grievance. Teachers should also keep their records until the grievance is resolved. Procrastination does not pay. File your grievance when the maximum is exceeded. A student who has reported to school and who has not been discharged counts on your class roster.

Class Size FAQ

Big Idea: DO NOT sign a “Resolution Form” for your class size grievance without discussing it with the union office!

What are the class size limits?

In general, the class size limits are as follows (The table below has more details):

- Grades K1-2: 22
- Grades 3-5: 25
- Grades 6-8: 28
- Grades 9-12: 31

Please note the following important exceptions:

In schools designated Level 3 or Level 4 by DESE (Now called “Focused/Targeted Support” schools), the maximum in grade 6 is 26, and in grade 9 the limit is 30.

In inclusion classes, there can be no more than 20 students at any grade level, with not more than 6 inclusion students. In the “Exhibit A” schools from the inclusion settlement (Bates, Blackstone, Bradley, Chittick, Clap, Condon, Conley, Curley, Edison, Everett, Harvard/Kent, PJ Kennedy, King, Lee, Mattahunt, Murphy, Otis, Quincy, Taylor and Sumner), there may be no more than 5 inclusion students.

In Bilingual, ESL, and SEI classes, there can be no more than 20 students at any grade level, or 25 if a paraprofessional is provided (though only 22 with a para in grades K1 and K2).

In elementary schools where there is only one regular education class in a grade level, the above maxima may be exceeded by one or two students. Similarly, in secondary schools where there is a singular regular education course offering (for instance, only a single section of French 4, or AP Physics, etc.), the maxima may be exceeded by one or two students.
Are these strict limits?

BTU members, and the students we serve, have among the strongest class size language in the state. While we might want the actual limits to be lower, the limits themselves are firm. The most important sentence in our contract around class size is this: “Ultimately, the classroom teacher may insist that the class size maximum be enforced.” (p. 25) This right was reinforced by a settlement agreement reached in 2004 between the BTU and the BPS.

When the Boston Public Schools assigns more students to a class than are allowed under our contract, they do a disservice to those students. It is our job to ensure that our kids get the differentiation and personalized attention that they deserve. We can do this by insisting that our class size limits are enforced.

What should I do if my class size is over the limit?

First, file a grievance immediately. You can do this from the BTU website. At the same time, please download and print the form at the same website and record your class size each day throughout the year. We will need this at the end of the year to process your grievance and ensure proper payment if compensation is required.

Second, you should insist that the class size issue is addressed. This could involve moving a student or students to a different class or section, opening a new class, or adding a teacher. While the district may offer a paraprofessional or payment to you, our advice is to “insist that the class size maximum be enforced.” This follows our contract, and ensures that our students get the education they deserve. Stay strong. Your principal and others will try to pressure you to settle for a stipend. If you do this, you are letting our colleagues and our kids down.

My principal gave me a form to waive the grievance and accept payment. Should I sign it?

No. We do not believe these forms are valid without involvement of a member of the BTU staff. Do not sign any form without consulting with your building representative, field representative, or BTU Vice President Erik Berg, at eberg@btu.org. We believe that class size issues are most effectively addressed by adding personnel, not paying a stipend. And with the limited exceptions of single-strand elementary schools and secondary schools with a single course offering, the payment that is owed to teachers is significantly more than $1500.

What payment is owed to teachers who taught oversubscribed classes and the grievance was not resolved?

There are two arbitration decisions governing this situation. The calculations are different for elementary and secondary teachers, but in every case, teachers are owed significantly more than $1500 per student.
### Class Size Maxima
#### 2020 - 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BPS SCHOOLS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten – Grade 2</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grades 3 - 5</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>Grade 6</td>
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<td>Grade 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grades 9 - 12</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade Combinations (Elem.)</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industrial Classes</td>
<td>20</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS WHERE THERE IS ONLY ONE REGULAR EDUCATION CLASS IN A GRADE LEVEL, THE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT MAY EXCEED THE CLASS SIZE MAXIMA BY ONE OR TWO STUDENTS. FOR ONE STUDENT OVER THE CLASS SIZE MAXIMA THE TEACHER WILL RECEIVE $1,500. AND FOR TWO STUDENTS $3,000.**

**IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS WHERE THERE IS A SINGULAR REGULAR EDUCATION COURSE OFFERING, THE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT MAY EXCEED THE CLASS SIZE MAXIMA BY ONE OR TWO STUDENTS. FOR ONE STUDENT OVER THE CLASS SIZE MAXIMA THE TEACHER WILL RECEIVE $300. PER CLASS AND FOR TWO STUDENTS $600.**

### *GENERAL EDUCATION*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 3 or 4 Schools (now “Focused/Targeted Support”)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
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<td>Grades 6 - 8</td>
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<td>Grade 9</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>Grades 9 - 12</td>
<td>31</td>
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### *SPECIAL EDUCATION*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource Room</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Substantially Separate</td>
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### Inclusion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Description</th>
<th>Class Size</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOME VERY SPECIALIZED CLASSES, E.G. LAB CLUSTER, MAY HAVE A SMALLER CLASS SIZE.</td>
<td>20</td>
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### * BILINGUAL, ESL & SHELTERED IMMERSION *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Description</th>
<th>Class Size</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANY Grade</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>With paraprofessional</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>K1-K2 with paraprofessional</td>
<td>22</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Teachers should immediately report class size violations by filling out the form at [www.btu.org](http://www.btu.org)
Representing a Member at an Investigatory Meeting

In the Boston Public Schools, when an employee is alleged to have engaged in misconduct, the principal or supervisor will issue a letter inviting the employee to an “investigatory meeting,” or “IM.” This is an opportunity for the principal to investigate the alleged incident and the employee to tell her or his side of the story. Employees are entitled to union representation at this meeting, and representing members at investigatory meetings is an important function of your role as a Building Rep.

If a member asks you to join them at an IM, you should schedule it at a mutually convenient time. Your role is to advise the member, ensure that the member is treated fairly, and take notes.

Weingarten Rights

An employee is entitled to union representation if the employer is investigating an employee’s alleged misconduct or inadequate work performance, and the employer convenes a meeting that could result in disciplinary action. An employee’s right to have union representation in an investigatory or pre-disciplinary meeting was established for private-sector employees in a 1975 United States Supreme Court decision, NLRB v. Weingarten, Inc. The Massachusetts Department of Labor Relations has adopted the Weingarten rules for public employees covered by M.G.L. c.150E.

As a Building Rep at an Investigatory Meeting you have a right to:

- Be informed about the subject matter of the meeting.
- Consult privately with the employee before or during the meeting.
- Speak and be proactive during the interview, as long as doing so does not interfere with or disrupt the meeting.
- Advise and counsel the employee.
- Provide additional information to the employer at the end of questioning.
- Bear witness to the proceedings and take notes.
Conducting Elections and Faculty Votes

Election Protocol

1. Elections are run by Building Reps or Faculty Senate Election Committee. If BTU Reps are on the ballot, they organize and run the election but ballots must be distributed, collected and counted by a BTU member other than candidates for election. The election must be held in a neutral area such as the library or cafeteria, wherever possible, or online in remote learning times.

2. Give at least five (5) School Days written notice including time & location of vote.

3. Conducted by written secret ballot, or electronic ballot, of those BTU members who are present, eligible and voting.

4. Bldg. Reps. control location & time for voting which shall be listed in notice.

5. Ballots counted by BTU members other than candidates for election, ex. Faculty Senate Chair, BTU volunteers

6. Voters are BTU members assigned more than half time to your building. Eligibility dependent upon type of vote. Please see below.

*Please use this protocol even when the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of openings to allow for write in candidates. We want to encourage increased participation and capacity building within our Union. Voting is part of our by-laws

Type of vote

1. Waiver votes on contractual changes
   - 66% (%) majority
   - School site council must formally vote in approval in advance of faculty vote.
     i) Members of any bargaining unit affected by the waiver may vote. For instance, if it is about the length of P&D periods, only members of the teacher bargaining unit would vote because they are the only ones with P&D periods in their contract.

2. Middle/High School Teacher Schedule Changes
   a. Any Master Schedule change (e.g. 6 – period, 7-period, block schedule) from one year to another requires a waiver vote in accordance with regular contractual provisions, except a 55% vote is required instead of a 66% (%) vote.

3. Elections for BTU members on School Site Council
   a. Any eligible BTU member can vote and run for office

Note: Building Reps have no obligation to run a fraudulent vote. Some common examples:

b. School Site Council did not previously and formally approve by vote an issue where approval is necessary

c. Proposed schedule too vague

Contact your respective BTU Field Rep for clarity if needed.
Faculty Senate Guidelines

Note: Changes to the guidelines below are being proposed and are pending approval by the Executive Board of the BTU

Art. I Sec. E7 a & b

Faculty Senates may be formed in each school building and shall meet once every month after the close of the normal school day with the principal or headmaster concerned. Faculty senates will be recognized by the administration of that school as having an advisory voice in the operation of that school and having an advisory voice in the formation of educational policy.

Faculty Senate Chairpersons will meet twice each year on the elementary, middle and sr. High levels during days of regularly scheduled in-service meetings.

Meetings

1. The Faculty Senate shall plan and run in-service meetings, in cooperation with the administration and in accordance with the contract;
2. Elected by the teaching staff, it represents that staff in matters concerning school policy;
3. Present the administration with faculty positions on building procedures and educational policy;
4. Cooperate with building rep. in all contract matters and Union policy.

Membership

1. Only those eligible to vote shall be eligible for membership (see below);
2. The Faculty Senate will be composed of a minimum of five members, except in buildings where the number of teachers is less. In schools where the faculty numbers more than 50, membership should be on a 1 to 10 ratio. Members are generally elected at large, but in certain schools may be elected by departments, areas, pods, etc.
3. All Buildings Reps Are automatically members of the F.S. but should be elected as Building Reps separately.

Eligibility for Voting

1. All teaching personnel assigned to the building except short term subs;
2. Nurses, permanent librarians, guidance personnel.
3. No one above Group II.

Elections

1. Held by the first week of October
2. Outgoing F.S. appoints election committee; if no F.S. Then B.R. appoints election committee. Submit names in writing. In a case where not enough names are submitted, the B.R. should run a primary, entering the name of every eligible person in the building.
3. Separate ballots for B.R. and F.S. Union members only vote for B.R.
4. Ballots should be checked, one per vote.
Meetings

1. F.S. elects own chairperson;
2. F.S. should meet at least bi-weekly;
3. The administrative head must meet with the Faculty Senate at least monthly; present the administrative head with written positions of the faculty and demand a response.
4. Meet with the entire faculty at least monthly; Faculty should submit items for agenda; F.S. Chairperson determines agenda;
5. F.S. elects own secretary;
6. IN SERVICE MEETINGS
   • Faculty and administration submit items for agenda
   • Chairperson and administrative head determine the allotments
   • each (in b) chairs their section of meeting.

Communications

1. Keep accurate attendance and minutes of all meetings.
2. Supply each member of the faculty with a written report once each month.
3. Supply the BTU with a written report signed by the chairperson and the secretary by the first of each month.
4. Present the faculty with the responses of the administration head. If the faculty is dissatisfied with the response of the administrative head, it may be appealed to the Cluster Leader.

By-Laws

1. Each Faculty Senate should formulate its own by-laws following these guidelines and in compliance with the contract and union membership policy writing. In a case where not enough names are submitted, the B.R. should run a primary, entering the name of every eligible person in the building.
Setting up a faculty senate is as easy at 1-2-3

What is a Faculty Senate? The Faculty Senate is a place to identify common issues and set agreed upon goals and solutions to those issues, and a place to build community and unity amongst our members at a school.

1) Before the Meeting:
   a) Invite all members using a list-serve (excluding administration)
   b) Create an agenda, send it out to staff a day or two before the meeting with a reminder

2) At The Meeting
   a) Sign Up Sheet: have a sign-up sheet where you can record members’ names, phone numbers and non-BPS emails as they enter the meeting
   b) Introductions and Who’s In The Room: Name and role at the school, make a note of what grade levels and or specialists are not represented in the room and identify teachers who are present to report back to all missing parties. You might want to have a Google Doc of running notes from the meeting, too!
   c) Determine Norms as a Group: This ensures that the meeting remains a safe space to share and learn from each other. Some Suggestions are:
      i) Assume Best Intentions
      ii) Agree to Disagree
      iii) Respect Confidentiality
      iv) Step up Step Back
      v) Stick to the agenda
   d) Explain What a FS Is and Isn’t: Is a place where we come together to problem solve and build unity within the school. Isn’t a place to just complain.
   e) Assign a Note Taker: Ask someone to volunteer to take notes
   f) Explain Issue Identifying Protocol: a way to identify common issues and start tackling the most common ones first.
      i) Depending on the size of the group, use post-its or name tags: smaller groups use post-its, larger groups use name tags.
      ii) Ask each person to take 1-2 minutes to think of the greatest challenge confronting the school.
      iii) Write it in as few words as possible on the post-its or name tags. Only one per person!

For Larger Groups:
   - Have members wear their issue name tags and do a silent gallery walk to see what other people are concerned about and also start forming affinity groups based on similar issues. The issues of the largest groups will take precedence.
   - Once everyone is in a group:
     ○ Discuss the issue and summarize it in one sentence.
     ○ Describe what the school would look like if this wasn’t an issue—what’s the ideal vision?
     ○ What are concrete steps you can take to address this issue and move towards the vision of what it should be like? (Record on large paper)
   - Selection Process: Have each member walk around and check off one concrete solution from each affinity group.
   - Tally up member choices and create a list of the most popular solutions to present to the administration. Proceed to Step 3, Next Steps.

For Smaller Groups
   - Have members post sticky notes on a wall or poster board.
   - Selection process: Arrange stickies to form groups based on identical/similar issues.
   - Select the largest issue to tackle as a group (the one with the most stickies)
   - As a whole group:
     ○ Discuss the issue and summarize it in one sentence
     ○ Describe what the school would look like if this wasn’t an issue
     ○ What are concrete steps you can take to address this issue and move towards the vision of what it should be like? (record on large paper)
   - Proceed to Step 3, Next Steps.
3. Next Steps

- **Set Date For Next FS Meeting**, if there’s not a set date already--It’s best to set a regular schedule! (i.e. First Friday of every month an hour before school starts.)

- **Take Notes**: record notes in a google doc and share with all BTU members, present and absent or have a binder of notes that those who are not present can check.

- **Check-In**: Report meeting highlights and solutions to absent staff, if the majority of the staff agrees with the solutions then proceed.

- **Notice**: It may take one or more meetings to get to the point where your faculty senate is ready to present your solutions to admin.

- **Meet with Admin**: It is important for members and administration to work together to create better working and learning environments for all students.

- **Schedule a Meeting**: Set a date and time with the Principal to meet with staff. It’s a great idea to set up monthly recurring meetings with admin to discuss issues and solutions generated in faculty senate meetings.

- **Meet with Principal/Admin**: Ask members to volunteer to attend a meeting with admin as a representative group of about 4-7 staff members from as many grade levels and content specialists as possible. (i.e. one of each kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grade teacher, a specialist and the nurse)

- **Get a Confirmation**: If the Admin agrees to implement solutions make a note of it, and hold them accountable. If they do not give a clear confirmation to adopt said suggestions, ask that they make some recommendations of their own since the issue is harming the school community, and make a note of it.

- **Report Back**: Update staff on the outcome of the meeting with Admin. Once one or more issues are resolved, move down to the next major issue and find solutions to those concerns.
Contract Action Team (CAT)

What is a Contract Action Team (CAT)?

A CAT is the structure through which you organize your staff to be united and ready to take action. This allows for the work of the union to not just fall on the shoulders of the building reps. After all, the union is all of us.

Think of a CAT as a phone tree. As a building rep, you do not need to be the CAT leader, but we encourage you to be on the CAT Team. You should find someone to be the CAT leader and work closely with that person. They will coordinate a team of CAT members, who each have 10 members they are responsible for. When it’s time to take action, you will contact the CAT leader, who will communicate with the CAT members, who will communicate with their 10 members. After the action, you can collect feedback from CAT members on how many people participated.

Setting up your CAT

Step 1: Identify leaders at your school

The CAT should be made up of the leaders in your school. This doesn’t only mean the people willing to do the work, but the people who lead groups among your staff. You could have a member who is generally down with the union but isn’t the militant activist. Yet being an activist doesn’t mean you’re always the best leader. Think about the different groups in your school. Who is a natural leader that people listen to and respect? Who are the cliques? Who is respected among the paras? The ABAs? Is there a go-to person for the upper grade team? Who organizes the socials after school on Friday? The number of CAT team members is based on a 1:10 ratio (one CAT member for at most every ten members at your school).

Invite those leaders to join the Contract Action Team

Meet individually with the leaders you identified and ask them to join the CAT. Share with them the responsibilities and expectations of being a member of the CAT.

Meet as a Contract Action Team

Get a copy of your school roster. Is this list right? Are you missing anyone? Is their contact information (including a cell phone and non-work email address) correct? Do you have any new staffers who have not yet joined the union? Make sure you include all paras, ABAs, nurses, social workers, psychologists, family liaisons, RSPs, cluster subs, long-term subs, and anyone else in the union.

After you have gone through the list, divide the members up into a 1:10 CAT member to member ratio. These are the members each CAT team member will be responsible for reaching out to converse, inform, engage and activate. Phone calls are the best method of outreach, and you can send a text or email as a follow-up.

Take Action!

Get your CAT active! As a group, brainstorm some ideas that will activate your CAT. An easy one is to get BTU members to wear union colors on a specific day. Task each CAT member to reach out to their list of contacts and on Friday take a picture! Did it work? Did members wear a union color? What other fun and creative action can you take?
Keep an eye on the BTU Bulletin and communications from BTU staff for union-wide actions as well. Collectively, we want to be able to quickly mobilize all our members.

**Family Engagement Point People**

Families and educators are stronger together as we fight for the conditions in our schools and in our communities that our students deserve. As we negotiate our next union contract, we need to build our connections with families in our schools. One way we can do this is by having a special role on our CAT: The Family Engagement Point Person (FEPP)

The FEPP builds a school based contact list of family members who may be interested in attending BTU events and advocating with us for the improvements we collectively believe are necessary to achieve an excellent education for ALL BPS students.

**The role of the FEPP is as follows:**

- Start a contact list of family members at the school who are interested in attending BTU events and advocating with educators for improvements related to the conditions necessary for excellent and equitable education.
- Reach out to other school staff to make them aware of this effort and encourage them to add the names of family members they know.
- Seek to connect with other school staff who are already engaged in the work of building relationships with families and invite their involvement.
- Reach out to the family members who lead or are involved with the School Parent Council and School Site Council, talk to them about this project, and seek their support and participation.
- Learn about any family engagement work already taking place at the school, and keep track of it and think of ways, as a union, we can support these efforts.
- Assess the interest of family members and educators to hold school-based or community-based family engagement training or workshops, and reach out to BTU Member Organizers and Staff for support.
- Meet bimonthly with FEPPs from other schools to reflect on the work, share ideas, and learn from one another.
Role of the School Site Council, the Personnel Subcommittee and the Instructional Leadership Team

The parties agree that 1) the School Site Council shall remain the central governing body of the school under the school-based management/shared decision making model; 2) the Instructional Leadership Team is an advisory body to the principal/headmaster on issues related to teaching, learning, assessment, and professional development; and 3) the decisions of the Personnel Subcommittee are not subject to the approval of the School Site Council.

School Site Council

The Role of the School Site Council shall be:

- To review and approve the Whole School Improvement Plan within guidelines established by the Superintendent.
- To approve the budget for discretionary school materials, supplies, textbooks and equipment, including the use of school improvement award funds.
- To develop and approve plans for increasing parent involvement in the school.
- To approve waivers.
- To review and approve recommendations of the Instructional Leadership Team that will have a major effect on the school community. Such recommendations need not be forwarded to the School Site Council unless they are endorsed by the principal/headmaster.
- To review and approve recommendations from any other committee or group that is established to recommend changes that will have a major effect on the school community.
- To receive information about all outside programs and outside professionals that come into the school.
- To review and comment on the entire school budget, including the General Fund and External Funds budgets in a timely fashion. Upon written request school site council members shall be provided with written or electronic copies of school budgets.

Voting: The consensus model of decision making is encouraged when making decisions as a council. Formally, decisions of a School Site Council also can be by majority vote with the Principal/Headmaster voting with the majority. The Principal/Headmaster may not delegate his or her vote except in emergency situations. The Principal/Headmaster is required to account in writing and in person (at a subsequent meeting) for any vote in contravention of a majority of the Council. In the event that a school has no sitting or acting Principal/Headmaster, the appropriate central office administrator or his or her designee shall be substituted.

*Each School Site Council is responsible for finding ways to implement the intent of the provisions governing school-based management in ways that do not violate outstanding court orders or state and federal laws and regulations.
**Personnel Subcommittee**

The Role of the Personnel Subcommittee of the School Site Council shall be:

- To approve the hiring of new BTU teachers’ bargaining unit staff and in-transfer of BTU teachers’ bargaining unit staff from other schools in the system and the choice of teachers from the Post Transfer Placement Process (PTPP).
- To approve the selection of Lead Teachers, Mentor Teachers, and new athletic coaches.
- To determine the schedule and procedures for reviewing candidates for positions.

**Instruction Leadership Team**

The Role of the Instructional Leadership Team:

- An Instructional Leadership Team shall be established at each school and shall be a representative body of the professional staff at the school. It shall be composed of administrators and teachers from the various grade levels, disciplines, and programs of the school.
- The Team shall serve as an advisory board to the principal/headmaster on issues related to teaching, learning, assessment and professional development.
- It shall be the responsibility of the principal/headmaster to give a report each month to the School Site Council on the activities of the Instructional Leadership Team.
- Any recommendation of the ILT that alters the Whole School Improvement Plan or may have a major effect on the school community and which is supported by the principal/headmaster shall be subject to the approval of the School Site Council before being implemented.

**Important Contract Language**

Each Principal/Headmaster will create a description of the process for composing the ILT, Communicate the process to staff, and take the process to the School Site Council for Input. Where ILT members are compensated, the process shall include a job description.
Common Questions about PD and Scheduling

What is the length of the school day?

- Teachers in Schedule A elementary schools have to be present in school for 7:10 each day.
- Teachers in Schedule A middle schools work 7:20 per day
- Teachers in most secondary schools and EECs and ELCs work 6:40 per day.
- We all know most teachers work well beyond those hours in all schools, not to mention daily time spent at home and on weekends. We are referring here specifically to on-the-clock, ‘bell-to-bell’, mandated hours.

What are the hours of professional development?

- There are 18 hours of professional development
- The building administrator may establish the professional development schedule provided that the meeting schedule be provided to the staff no later than the end of school for the preceding year, none of the time be scheduled over the summer unless there is a waiver vote under CBA, and provided that no professional development time be scheduled on the 2nd Wed. of the month, and must be at least two hours in length.
- Teachers will receive a PDP certificate at the end of the school year for all time spent in professional development activities. Teachers may combine PDP activities year-to-year to comply with state requirements.
- For all of the above, the professional development content belongs exclusively to the building administrator and participants get PDP-certificates for their attendance for all of the PD time required.

What if you are absent on a day when a portion of the 18 hours are scheduled?

- If you are on legitimate leave (bereavement, sick, personal, etc.) and you miss a day when there is scheduled a 2-hour-or-less professional development meeting, you do not have to make up the time.
- If you are on legitimate leave (bereavement, sick, personal, etc.) and you miss a day when there is scheduled a meeting that is longer than 2 hours, you do have to make up the time. The scheduling of the make-up of the time is a mutual agreed-upon endeavor.
- If you are in school and have to leave during the day of a scheduled PD meeting of any duration, you owe the time & must reschedule the missed time with the school administrator.

Is January 2nd an all day Professional Day?

- Each staff by a majority vote (secret ballot, five days’ notice, run by the BTU Building Rep.) can convert January 2nd to 6 hours. The vote includes the length of the meetings and the dates of the meetings, 6 hours in all. This vote should have been taken last June, but can be re-voted this September (by the 15th) if more than 25% of the staff is new to the building. The faculty alone has control over the decision to convert this day.
- Specialty staff throughout the city have one day set aside for PD, and that day is January 2.
What if your administrator schedules a 40-hour math (etc.) workshop?

- Anything over either the 24 hours (with the conversion) or the 18 hours (without) as mentioned above is voluntary, no matter how worthy and valuable. Scheduling Breakdown in Traditional and Schedule A Schools: Teachers

### Scheduling Breakdown in Traditional and Schedule A Schools: Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contract Provision</th>
<th>Non-Schedule A - Traditional Schools</th>
<th>Schedule A</th>
<th>Schedule A Changes in TA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Secondary'</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Work Day</td>
<td>6:30</td>
<td>6:40</td>
<td>7:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Day</td>
<td>6:00^2</td>
<td>6:10</td>
<td>6:40^2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report and Sign-out</td>
<td>:15 before and :15 after instructional day^3,4</td>
<td>:15 before and :15 after instructional day^3,4</td>
<td>:15 before and :15 after instructional day^3,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consecutive Teaching Minutes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Teaching Time Per Day</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P&amp;D Periods (minimum)</td>
<td>48min. 4x/wk^5</td>
<td>240min./wk^6</td>
<td>48min. 4x/wk^5+35min/wk^7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Planning Time (CPT)</td>
<td>48min./wk</td>
<td>see note^8</td>
<td>48min./wk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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^1 Includes Irving, Horace Mann

^2 K-8 schools should default to elementary length instructional day (students only; work day is by grade level).

^3 Where instructional day is longer or shorter than prescribed time, overall length of workday may not exceed that listed in Row 1

^4 These :30 may be reallocated (e.g. 10 before and 20 after) by a majority vote of the faculty

^5 No more than 2 P&Ds per day

^6 P&D must be provided daily, no shorter than 40 consecutive minutes

^7 Must be in either 1 35min. block per week or 5 7-minute periods
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duty-Free Lunches</th>
<th>40min</th>
<th>25min</th>
<th>40min</th>
<th>25min</th>
<th>No change</th>
<th>No change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Facilitated Time (TFT)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40min./wk</td>
<td>40min./wk</td>
<td>Eliminated, becomes P&amp;D</td>
<td>Eliminated, may become CPT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PD Calendar</td>
<td>Principal sets calendar</td>
<td>Principal sets calendar</td>
<td>Staff approves in June</td>
<td>Staff approves in June</td>
<td>No change</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Scheduling Breakdown in Traditional and Schedule A Schools: Paraprofessionals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contract Provision</th>
<th>Standard CBA Language (Pre-Schedule A)</th>
<th>Schedule A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Length of Work Day</td>
<td>All Paraprofessionals</td>
<td>All Paraprofessionals&lt;sup&gt;9&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6:10&lt;sup&gt;10&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>6:50&lt;sup&gt;10&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Break</td>
<td>:10</td>
<td>:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duty-Free Lunches</td>
<td>:30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<sup>8</sup> Secondary schools do not have contractual CPT time. Generally, such time is allocated through an administrative period.

<sup>9</sup> Some traditional and schedule A schools schedule and compensate paraprofessionals for hours beyond those outlined here. For example, secondary schools like Irving with a 6:50 instructional day set the para work day at 7:00.

<sup>10</sup> Paraprofessionals are hourly employees and as such must be compensated for all hours worked, including those beyond the length of the work day.
## Four types of autonomous schools in BPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Pilot Schools**     | • Created by agreement between BPS and BTU in 1995  
• Operate based on Pilot Schools Manual, developed by Pilot school leaders  
• Negotiate working conditions with teachers, codified in school-specific Election to Work Agreements (EWAs) |
| **Innovation Schools**| • Created by the state legislature in 2010  
• Operate under individual Memorandum of Understanding with BPS, based on Innovation Plans approved by the school committee  
• Like Pilot Schools each Innovation school also has its own EWA |
| **Horace Mann Charter Schools** | • Created by the state legislature in 2010 Authorized by the state  
• Operate with autonomies similar to that of Commonwealth charter schools  
• Working conditions are further detailed in a MOU with the district |
| **Turnaround Schools** | • Created by the state legislature  
• Selected by the district for increased support after “Level 4” designation  
• Granted some of the budget, staffing and time flexibility that Pilot an innovation schools have  
• Staff receive stipends for increased time  
• Retain significant flexibility from the terms of collective bargaining agreements |
Pilot School Schedules

Pilot schools create their own schedules subject to the below:

Pilot school teachers and paraprofessionals can be required to work additional time, either in hours or days. But there is compensation for some of those additional hours. Here’s a short description of what constitutes extra time in a pilot school, how to calculate it, and how the additional compensation will look.

To understand this, we first have to look at the traditional school schedule. The school day is defined as 6:30 for elementary teachers and 6:40 for secondary teachers. If you are given a :30-minute break in the middle of the day for lunch, or time-off for whatever, that time counts as part of the school day.

The length of the traditional school year is 180 school days as defined above. There are 3 additional non-student days: the two days after Labor Day and the day after the Winter/December break. These three non-student days, however, are 6-hour days for a total of 18 hours. In addition to the ‘180’ plus the ‘3’, there are 18 additional hours of professional development time and 4 hours of parental contact time This is a total of 1,210 hours for elementary teachers and 1,240 hours for secondary teachers. There are no other days or hours required, whether during the school year, in the summer, or whenever. All time required above and beyond what is defined in this paragraph is considered additional time and would contribute to the limits, which, if exceeded, require compensation. If you have any questions on this calculation, please call the BTU office.

All hours beyond the normal school day/year in excess of 45 will be compensated, so it is important to confirm the actual number of hours required. The first 100 hours in excess of 45 will be compensated by the city; all hours beyond those will be compensated by the individual school.

The compensation for time above and beyond the hours detailed above will be at the contractual hourly rate and will be retirement-worthy.
Turnaround School Schedules

Beginning with the 2012-2013 school year, the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education established “Turnaround Schools,” which have also been known as “Level 4” schools. The existence of Turnaround Schools was established by state law, and unions lose some collective bargaining rights in Turnaround Schools. Turnaround Schools may work longer hours for additional compensation, the terms of which are usually governed by a Memorandum of Agreement negotiated by the BTU and the School Department, but in any case should be no less than $40.26 per hour during the 2019-2020 School Year.

Any questions on any of the above, please call the BTU office at 617-288-2000.
Crafting a Thoughtful Election to Work Agreement (EWA)

Pilot Schools and Election to Work Agreements

Every year, according to our contract (pg. 17-19), Pilot Schools have an opportunity to revisit the Election to Work Agreement (EWA) that determines the working conditions at their school. Contract language states that the agreement designating length of work day and school year, professional development time, and summer work, originates with the Governing Board. However, in practice, Building Reps and staff in many pilot schools initiate the work to revamp Election to Work Agreements. Building Reps should look to gather input from members and craft new language in the fall in order to be able to impact the EWA for the following year. The proposed changes should be shared with the Governing Board. The Governing Board is required to present the staff at the school with a proposal for the EWA for the following year by January 15. BTU Bargaining Unit members can vote to reject the Governing Board’s proposal by a 2/3 majority vote and then return the proposal to the Governing Board for possible re-working. If an agreement is not reached by February 15, the previous year’s EWA remains in place. Please reach out to the BTU staff if you need support navigating this process.

Innovation Schools and Horace Mann In-District Charter Schools also sometimes have Election to Work agreements but these schools are governed by DESE regulations. See below for links to more information regarding these types of schools.

Innovation - http://www.doe.mass.edu/redesign/innovation/

Horace Mann Charters - http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/guidance/2003-1.html